March is joint second coldest on record

Description

Provisional full-month Met Office figures for March confirm it has been an exceptionally cold month, with a UK mean temperature of 2.2 °C.

This is 3.3 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average for the month, and ranks this March as joint second coldest (with 1947) in our records dating back to 1910. Only March 1962 was colder, with a record-breaking month mean temperature of 1.9 °C.

In an unusual turn of events, this March was also colder than the preceding winter months of December (3.8 °C), January (3.3 °C) and February (2.8 °C). This last happened in 1975.

Looking at individual countries, the mean temperature for England for March was 2.6 °C – making it the second coldest on record, with only 1962 being colder (2.3 °C). In Wales, the mean temperature was 2.4 °C which also ranks it as the second coldest recorded – with only 1962 registering a lower temperature (2.1 °C). Scotland saw a mean temperature of 1.3 °C, which is joint fifth alongside 1916 and 1958. The coldest March on record for Scotland was set in 1947 (0.2 °C). For Northern Ireland, this March saw a mean temperature of 2.8 °C, which is joint second alongside 1919, 1937, and 1962. The record was set in 1947 (2.5 °C).

This March was also much drier than average for the UK, with 62.1mm of rain falling during the month – just 65% of the 95.1mm average. Scotland was particularly dry, seeing 49.5mm of rain which is 35% of its long term average for the month.

Sunshine hours were also slightly down compared to average, with 82.9 hours for the UK notching up 81% of the average.

The cold and dry conditions seen in March were largely due to high pressure dominating UK weather patterns, allowing cold and relatively dry air to move in from the east. While this pattern is set to continue through the first week of April, milder and more unsettled conditions are expected to move in for the start of next week. You can stay up to date with the latest information with the Met Office's forecasts.

March 2013	**Actual**	**Difference from average**	**Actual**	**% of average**
Regions	**°C**	**°C**	**mm**	**%**
UK	2.2	-3.3	62.1	65
England	2.6	-3.6	64.4	101
Wales	2.4	-3.4	86.2	74
Scotland	1.3	-2.9	49.5	35
N Ireland	2.8	-3.1	74.1	78

England & Wales	2.6	-3.6	67.4	95
England N	1.8	-3.7	56.4	75
England S	3	-3.5	68.6	118

March – top five coldest in the UK

1	1962	1.9 °C
2	2013	2.2 °C
2	1947	2.2 °C
4	1937	2.4 °C
5	1916	2.5 °C

Date Created
April 2013

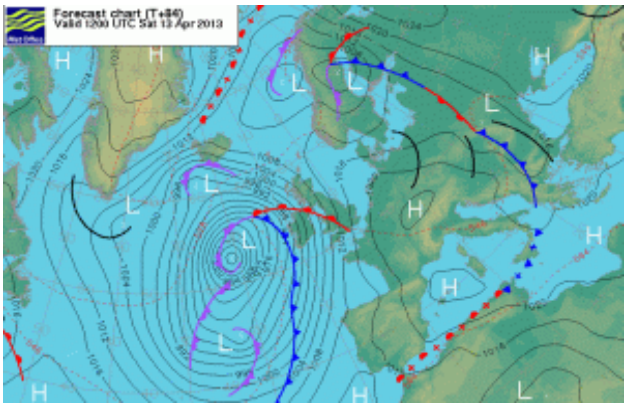
Warm but unsettled weekend ahead as cold eases grip on UK

Description

The UK is set to see some warmer temperatures this weekend as the colder than average weather seen so far this April eases its grip.

Temperatures have been steadily climbing since the exceptionally cold weather towards the start of the month, with today through to Friday set to see double-digit figures for many places.

On Saturday temperatures will be generally between 11 and 13 °C, feeling much milder than recent days. However, the weather will be wet, fairly windy and unsettled for many parts – with the best of any drier and brighter weather in the south and east.



Forecast chart for midday Saturday shows low pressure moving in from the Atlantic to bring mild but wet and windy weather for most of the country. High pressure still dominates in the south and east, bringing the best of any drier and brighter weather.

Warmest day of the year so far

Sunday looks set to be the warmest day of 2013 so far, with temperatures expected to be widely in the mid-teens Celsius. While the weather will be slightly more settled than Saturday, many places will see cloudy and breezy conditions with a risk of some light showers.

Once again the south and east will see the best of the weather, with drier and brighter conditions and temperatures of 15-18 °C – with a possibility that some isolated spots could reach around 20 °C.

Leading in to next week temperatures look set to cool slightly, but remain around average for the time of year.

Jet stream shift brings milder weather

The reason for the shift away from the colder weather is the re-alignment of the jet stream, a band of fast moving westerly winds high up in the atmosphere which tends to guide Atlantic weather systems. It's these weather systems that bring us the mild and unsettled weather we normally expect at this time of year.

During the prolonged cold conditions the jet stream tracked far to the south of the UK, guiding those mild weather systems towards the Mediterranean. The UK, meanwhile, saw an easterly flow – bringing in cold conditions from the cold winter climes of north-east Europe.

Now the jet stream has started to shift its track, moving north to a position more in line with what we'd expect at this time of year. This means we expect to see milder, but also more unsettled weather coming in from the Atlantic over the coming week or so.

Date Created
April 2013

March weather summary video and your photos

Description

March was much colder than average, the coldest since 1962 and colder than the preceding winter months of December, January and February. Forecaster Charlie talks through the month's weather in our latest video or you can read the detailed report on our website.

Thank you to everyone who sent in their pictures of UK weather in March on Twitter. Some of our favourites are below…

> @metoffice tropical conditions on 30 March – Vatersay in the Hebrides twitter.com/JaneToothill/s…
>
> — Jane Toothill (@JaneToothill) April 9, 2013

> @metoffice Newquay rainbow. twitter.com/Surf_Photo/sta…
>
> — Sharpy (@Surf_Photo) April 9, 2013

> @metoffice snowdon in all it's snowy glory twitter.com/Paulproject_/s…
>
> — Paul Jones (@Paulproject_) April 9, 2013

> @metoffice @keeleydonovan Drilling beans on a March frost. twitpic.com/ci79qc
>
> — Malc Parr (@tractorman07) April 9, 2013

> @metoffice Looking south down the Sound of Raasay from the summit of Ben Tianavaig, Isle of Skye, March 27. twitter.com/snapa13/status…
>
> — Neil(@snapa13) April 9, 2013

> @metoffice Mock Sun in London last Sunday twitter.com/Meteorologia_E…
>
> — Meteorologia_Extrema (@Meteorologia_Ex) April 9, 2013

@metoffice snow still with us on the Lakeland fells. Bowfell in the sun. twitter.com/ian4254/status…

— ian johnson (@ian4254) April 9, 2013

@metoffice flickr.com/photos/tupperw…

— The Flying GoPro (@theflyinggopro) April 9, 2013

@metoffice hiking in the Brecon Beacons in snow! twitter.com/iWalknTalk/sta…

— Nick Baldwin (@iWalknTalk) April 9, 2013

@metoffice on Racavan Road, Near Slemish , Ballymena Co.Antrim twitter.com/lfclee2011/sta…

— Lisa Southgate (@lfclee2011) April 9, 2013

@metoffice sunset in the Orkneys twitter.com/AndyReohorn/st…

— Andy Reohorn (@AndyReohorn) April 9, 2013

@metoffice @keeleydonovanI took this in March while on holiday in Old Hunstanton, Norfolk. twitter.com/DanielBritton/…

— Daniel Britton (@DanielBritton) April 9, 2013

Date Created
April 2013

Countdown to NASA Space Apps Challenge

This weekend will see the Met Office again linking up with sites across the world for the NASA International Space Apps Challenge.

This year, the Met Office is the European lead event for the Space Apps Challenge, with other events in the UK being held in London, Glasgow, York and Leicester.

In Exeter, over 70 people will be collaborating on challenges which have been submitted by NASA teams and other contributors around the globe.

One challenge designed by Catherine Muller of Birmingham University and Michael Saunby of the Met Office is Smart Cities, Smart Climate. The challenge will look at how sensor networks in cities can be used to monitor the climate in urban areas.

As more of the world's population now inhabit towns and cities, and the part of the world's surface covered by built-up environments is growing, Urban environments are becoming increasingly important and relevant to study. Therefore much more data and tools for analysing that data are required.

Spaces are still available for Space Apps Challenge in Exeter. You can follow all the action from the weekend on Twitter @spaceappslondon and @spaceappsexeter.

Date Created
April 2013

2nd International Space Apps Challenge at Exeter

Description

NASA Space Apps Challenge

Over the weekend, the Met Office hosted the NASA led International Space Apps Challenge. Months of planning and challenge selection culminated in a global event with over 480 organisations and more than 9,000 people taking part in 83 cities.The Met Office hosted events at the Met Office headquarters in Exeter and Google Campus in London, which saw over 150 participants work on challenges using open data.

Teams at the event in Exeter participated in a number of challenges including the Arduhack challenge which looked at extending the functionality of the ArduSat with a Raspberry Pi computer and steerable web camera to send images of the Earth to mobile phones.

The judges were extremely impressed by the collaboration of the teams and the progress made on all of the challenges. The two winning solutions, decided by a panel of judges from, Mubaloo, Dundee University and Tangerine Bee, were WebRover1 and Arduhack. These will now be judged against other winning challenges globally, with winners announced a week after the event.

Mark Mason, CEO of Mubaloo said: “We are delighted to have been able to judge at the NASA Space Apps Challenge for the second year in a row. The challenge has again highlighted how much can be achieved in such a short space of time with teams working together using crowdsourcing and open source data. We’d like to wish the winning teams from Exeter best of luck in the global judging.”

Date Created
April 2013

NASA International Space Apps Challenge London

Description

The Met Office hosted the NASA led International Space Apps Challenge at the Google Campus in London on the weekend of the 20 – 21 April.

Chris Gerty, from the Open Innovation Programme at NASA was at the London event and thanked the Met Office for making the weekend such a success.

More than 85 people attended the event from across the UK and Europe, making 13 different teams working on challenges over the weekend. See all the pictures from the weekend on our Flickr account.

Two challenges from London will go forward for global judging and these were decided by a panel of three judges, Chris Gerty from NASA, Irini Papadimitriou, Digital Programmes Assistant Manager at the V&A and Phil Evans, Government Services Director at the Met Office.

The two winning challenges from London were People of the Soil and T-10.

People of the Soil developed a low cost digital soil testing kit, web and SMS protocols and a web application to collect and share soil data globally.

T-10 created an app that astronauts can use on the Space Station to alert them to suitable times to photograph specific parts of Earth.

These will now be judged against other winning challenges globally, with winners being announced by NASA in the coming weeks. Follow @spaceappslondon to find out which challenges win NASA's global judging next month.

Date Created
April 2013